

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ROME 00188 051611Z  
ACTION SS-25

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O 051525Z JAN 78 ZFF-4  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9646  
AMEMBASSY PARIS NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T ROME 0188

EXDIS

DEPT FOR ACTING SECRETARY, PARIS FOR THE SECRETARY AND DR.  
BRZEZINSKI

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3, IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE DATE  
TAGS: PFOR, IT, PINT  
SUBJECT: STATEMENT ON ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: STATE 001167

1. I GREATLY APPRECIATE THE INDICATION IN REFTEL THAT WE AND THE DEPARTMENT ARE IN AGREEMENT ON THE ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION AND ON THE "NEED TO MAKE CLEARER THE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR ITALY, NATO AND THE WEST OF ACCESSION TO POWER BY THE ITALIAN COMMUNISTS." I CAN ALSO APPRECIATE AND ACCEPT POINTS MADE PARA 2, REFTEL ABOUT THE SHORTNESS OF TIME AND THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS THAT A STATEMENT ON ITALY IN BRUSSELS COULD HAVE ON THE FRENCH SITUATION.

2. THERE ARE HOWEVER TWO POINTS THAT I MUST MAKE. FIRST, THE DEPARTMENT'S SUGGESTED REDRAFT OF THE PROPOSED STATEMENT (PARA 4, REFTEL) DOES NOT ANSWER THE NEED FOR A CLARIFICATION OF THE US POSITION. IT COULD INDEED HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT OF THE ONE DESIRED. OUR DRAFT STATEMENT WAS DESIGNED TO RESPOND TO AND CLARIFY OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD TWO ISSUES THAT HAVE  
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GREAT CURRENCY IN POLITICAL CIRCLES HERE. ONE OF THESE WAS STATED CLEARLY IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI YESTERDAY; THAT IS, THAT SINCE THE USG HAS SAID IT WILL NOT INTERFERE IN ITALIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS IT IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT WHATEVER SOLUTIONS THE ITALIANS WORK OUT. THE OTHER WAS STATED CLEARLY LAST WEEK BY GALLONI, VICE-SECRETARY OF THE DC PARTY: THAT THE US OBJECTS STRONGLY TO COMMUNIST

PARTY MINISTERS IN THE GOVERNMENT BUT THAT IT WILL ACCEPT ANYTHING SHORT OF THAT INCLUDING THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE GOVERNING PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY. IN MY VIEW, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE MAKE CLEAR TO THE ITALIAN POLITICAL LEADERS THAT THESE ARE INACCURATE STATEMENTS OF THE USG'S ATTITUDE. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO THIS THROUGH PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS WITH ITALIAN POLITICAL LEADERS BUT SUCH CONSULTATIONS OBVIOUSLY CANNOT BE AS EFFECTIVE AS A CLEAR STATEMENT FROM THE PRESIDENT. IF ANY STATEMENT IS TO BE MADE BY THE PRESIDENT, IT SHOULD CLEARLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY ADDRESS ITSELF TO THE ABOVE TWO POINTS AND MAKE CLEAR THAT BEGIN UNDERLINE ANY STEP THAT BRINGS THE PCI FURTHER INTO THE GOVERNING PROCESS END UNDERLINE (ROME 20640, STATE 301434) WOULD BE UNWELCOME AND WOULD HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON OUR BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL RELATIONS WITH ITALY. THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH YESTERDAY IN PARIS RECEIVED GOOD COVERAGE IN THE ITALIAN PRESS BUT WAS NOT READ -- EXCEPT IN ONE CONSERVATIVE NEWS-PAPER -- AS BEING AIMED AT THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION AND WAS NOT (UNDERSTANDABLY) SUFFICIENTLY POINTED TO ANSWER THE NEED HERE.

3. THE SECOND POINT RELATES TO TIMING. AS INDICATED FROM THE FORLANI/GALLONI STATEMENTS MENTIONED IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPHS, MANY ITALIAN POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE A MISTAKEN UNDERSTANDING OF OUR ATTITUDE. WITH SOME, THE MISUNDERSTANDING IS GENUINE AND IS BEING CORRECTED BY PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS; WITH OTHERS, THERE IS A TENDENCY TO BELIEVE WHAT THEY WANT TO  
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BELIEVE DESPITE WHAT WE SAY. IN ANY EVENT, THE NEED FOR CLARIFICATION IS URGENT, THE PRESENT CRISIS IS RAPIDLY COMING TO A HEAD. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC DIRECTORATE WILL MEET NEXT WEDNESDAY (JANUARY 11) TO FIX PARTY POLICY. THE OTHER PRINCIPAL PARTIES INVOLVED ARE ALSO SCHEDULING MEETINGS IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE FOR THE SAME PURPOSE. I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THEY UNDERSTAND CLEARLY AND UNAMBIGUOUSLY THAT THE USG WOULD VIEW WITH GRAVE CONCERN CONCEDING TO THE PCI, AS PART OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE PRESENT CRISIS, ANY GREATER ROLE THAN IT NOW HAS IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNING PROCESS. THE PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION INCLUDE BRINGING THE PCI INTO THE GOVERNING PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY (WHICH IN ITALY AS IN OTHER PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEMS IS TANTAMOUNT TO BEING PART OF THE GOVERNMENT) AND/OR A NEW GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD INCLUDE IN CABINET AND SUB-CABINET POSITIONS A CERTAIN NUMBER OF "TECHNICIANS" NOMINATED BY THE PCI. THEREFORE, I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT AND URGENT THAT OUR VIEWS BE STATED WITH SUFFICIENT CLARITY AND PRECISION -- WHILE AVOIDING EXPLICIT MENTION OF ANY GOVERNING FORMULA -- AS TO MAKE CLEAR THAT SUCH SOLUTIONS ARE MOST UNWELCOME TO US. IF IT IS DECIDED NOT TO MAKE A STATEMENT IN BRUSSELS, I URGE THAT THE PRESIDENT MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT UPON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON. GARDNER

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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